



## Needs Assessment Committee

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 28, 2006**

**Shelby County Administration Building  
Suite 850 Conference Room**

#### **Committee members present:**

Scott Fleming, Chairman

Nick Clark, Vice-Chairman

Cato Johnson, Vice-Chairman

Jay Weatherington

Dr. Thomas Glass

Commissioner David Lillard

Commissioner Deidre Malone

#### **Committee members absent:**

Nisha Powers, Secretary

David Pickler, Chairman SCS Board

Aubrey Howard

Sara Lewis

#### **Non-Voting Members Present:**

Grace Hutchinson

Terry Langlois

#### **Others Present:**

Louise Mercuro

Ethele Hillard

Michael Goar

Maura Sullivan

Susan Roakes

Jimmie Tucker

Commissioner Mike Ritz

Paula Lewis

Chairman Scott Fleming called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

#### **1. Old Business – Approval of minutes**

**December 12, 2005 meeting**

**January 20, 2006 meeting**

**March 23, 2005 meeting**

**July 27, 2006 meeting**

Chairman Fleming asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes of the last four meetings and there were none.

**Motion:** Motion was made by Nick Clark to approve minutes of all four previous meetings. Second by Cato Johnson.

**Action:** Motion was approved unanimously with no discussion.

## **2. New Business – Update on Pending Annexations**

Louise Mercuro gave a brief update on City of Memphis annexations. The Bridgewater annexation will occur in two portions. The residential area including the two schools, Dexter Elementary and Dexter Middle will be annexed by the City of Memphis on December 31, 2006. The remaining portion should be annexed some time next year. The first reading on the proposed Bridgewater annexation will be October 17, 2006 with the entire approval process completed by sometime in the month of November. Ms. Mercuro did emphasize that the City Council does not take into consideration school locations or the schools students within annexation areas attend as a basis for approving an annexation plan.

The City Council is currently beginning a review process on the proposed annexation of a portion of the southeast area of the county. The area currently under review contains 5 schools. A map of the proposed annexation will be e-mailed to the committee by Ms. Mercuro.

The Berryhill annexation will be completed by the end of this calendar year.

Commissioner Lillard asked what is the County school system going to do for schools in this area? Ms. Mercuro stated there are no provisions in this area. She said it would be up to the two school boards on how they want to handle this. Planning and Development is recommending in their report to the City Council that an agreement be negotiated between the school systems for the transfer of the schools and the determination of district boundaries.

Commissioner Lillard stated that there is a desire on the part of the people before County Commission to have minority representation on the Shelby County School Board – that is the most minority district in this school district and they will be changing that make-up.

Chairman Fleming asked Michael Goar to address the Memphis City Schools position on how they will deal with annexation in that area. Mr. Goar said that it is Superintendent Johnson's desire to work collaboratively with the Shelby County School Board. Our main concern is to accommodate our students with continuity and work together as much as possible with the Shelby County School Board.

Maura Sullivan stated that the Hickory Hill annexation included Getwell west and Industrial – this area contained 900 students and four (4) schools. They were south of the airport and to come back to county schools would have been 1 ½ hour bus ride. Both boards agreed back then that students would remain where they were and she hopes that that same type arrangement can be made in this situation. A complicated fact is that an area of that would not be part of the annexation. The high school is just under construction – legally what happens to that construction contract? Would it transfer to the Memphis City School Board?

Dr. Tom Glass asked Maura what is the percentage of African American in Shelby County Schools? Maura stated that it is approx. 30%. Dr. Glass said that there is a Supreme Court case the essentially set the legal standard as to the constitution of the election of school boards. This is as much a legal problem under the Civil Rights Act as it is a political problem.

Louise Mercuro said that they do not do annexations based on schools. They are done on density of development, amount of vacant land, etc. This area was scheduled to be annexed ten (10) years ago. The pattern of development is exactly as it should be for City Council to proceed. We don't ever include school costs in our tables.

Nick Clark asked Ms. Mercuro – for the purposes of understanding the impact on school services, could she prepare a map showing where the line would end approximately so the County would know the costs involved? Ms. Mercuro said she would get that to the committee but it would take a little time. The south east will go into litigation and under the new law the burden of proof is no longer on the City. It all depends on how anxious the City is to move forward.

Mr. Goar said that talking about the south east, the reverse is happening in Dexter Elementary and Dexter Middle. We're getting kids and not the facilities. The reverse is true here. Ms. Mercuro stated that the recommendation to the City Council next Tuesday will be to move forward with the annexation by December 31, 2006. Ms. Mercuro expects the Bridgewater annexation to pass with no resistance from City Council.

Nick Clark asked if anyone from the NAC needs to be at the Council meeting and Ms. Mercuro stated that it was not necessary at this time.

Commissioner Lillard stated that in the past schools have not been in consideration for annexations. He doesn't support dumping students without facilities going with them. He urged the committee to look at both of these annexations for what is the best planned use of these facilities and that the facilities should go with the students. Ms. Mercuro stated that Chapter 1101 amendment last year requires the city to notify the county that schools are being taken.

Dr. Glass asked if the Council has considered the racial distribution? Ms. Mercuro said they do not look at race at all. Dr. Glass's next question was are you increasing African

American students in City schools and decreasing them in County Schools? Ms. Mercuro's response was that is not something the Council can control.

Commissioner Lillard said one of his main concerns has been to get minority participation on the County School board and District 7 has the most minority population. Now we are taking that out by annexation. Cato Johnson suggested that we forward a copy of this meeting's minutes to the City Council to let them know of this Committees' concerns.

### **3. Update on consultant contract for recommendation to County Commission for approval**

Chairman Fleming said that the official "vote" to recommend consultant DeJong, Inc, is included in the packet. Mayor Wharton realizes we do need muscle power to do work between meetings and let the experts do it. Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Goar do an excellent job and it will be the consultant's job to work with them and assist them in gathering and reporting information back to us. This consultant will help us make the right decisions and we want to view them as allies and help us make the right recommendations. Their goal is to take everyone's information and help us. The scope of work is broad enough to help us get where we need to be. We just need to make sure the public knows that someone is out there looking out for their best interests. Grace Hutchinson stated that the next step is to draft a resolution the County Commission approval.

Commissioner Lillard stated that his vote was no in recommending the consultants because he did not agree with the scope of services – it should include the aspect of school costs. Part of the process should be to look back and report what costs have been and how they compare with our targets. We should look at past tense projects and see how they are shaping up with previous projections.

Chairman Fleming said that DeJong, Inc were our consultants last year. He said he will talk with the consultants to ask them to include that in the scope of services. That was agreeable to the Committee. Nick Clark stated that he thought the County Commission would appreciate an historical status review on an annual basis.

**Motion:** Commissioner Lillard made a motion to amend the scope of services to include project costs, costs per square foot and also a status report regarding use of funding. Second by Commissioner Malone.

Michael Goar stated that the Memphis City Schools are excited to work with the consultant and concur with Commissioner Lillard on cost per square foot information. Nick Clark asked if the report would include reconciliation as to what benchmarks are and Commissioner Lillard said yes.

**Action:** Motion approved unanimously.

Chairman Fleming asked when will this Resolution be brought before the County Commission? Grace Hutchinson said she plans to have it on the next agenda on October 9, 2006 and would check with the consultant to ensure they can attend on that date.

#### **4. Kate Bond Property**

Michael Goar stated that the City Schools currently have a need for a middle school in the Kate Bond area and have a lack of capacity. Adjacent to Kate Bond Elementary school is vacant property owned by the Shelby County Conservation Board and is not being used.

Commissioner Lillard suggested that the Conservation Board give the property to the City Schools and asked Grace to prepare a resolution to the Conservation Board and inform him when the next meeting was so that he could attend and address this issue.

**Motion:** Commissioner Lillard made a motion for the NAC to support a resolution to the Conservation Board for them to deed this property on Kate Bond Road to City Schools for a middle school. Second made by Nick Clark.

**Action:** Motion approved unanimously

Chairman Fleming stated that the next meeting is scheduled for November 30, 2006 at 8:30. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nisha Powers, Secretary

Date

NP/pl

